

Cadet of the Year 2014, Utah Wing

Tue Feb 18, 2014

Greetings Utah Wing,

The Cadet Programs team is very proud to announce that Cadet Captain Luke Wilkins of Cache Valley Composite Squadron has been selected as the 2014 Utah Wing Cadet of the Year.

Cadet Captain Luke Wilkins is the prime example of what the Cadet Program can do to develop a young leader. For over four years Cadet Wilkins has consistently shown that hard work does pay off in CAP, academics, and the social realms. Cadet Wilkins has served as the Cadet Commander of his home unit for 14 months. He has worked hard to lead his team to overcome CAP's biggest problem: retention by recognizing that cadets stay in CAP more for the relationships that they build than the activities they attend. He has shown many cadets that they have new friends in CAP, and that they are able to learn and grow in leadership together. His squadron has enjoyed lasting growth under his guidance.

Cadet Wilkins is very active at the Utah Wing level with encampment leadership, Cadet Advisory Council, and planning of inter-squadron field training. He is an invaluable advocate for CAP with several local organizations that have given training opportunities to Cadets.

Cadet Wilkins personally worked with the professionals at Utah Avalanche Center to coordinate some hands-on safety demonstrations on a weekend FTX early this year.

Cadet Wilkins' proudest moments in his career were enjoyed at the 2013 Encampment. He led by a mature example as the Cadet Commander of the Encampment last year and led an executive staff that is now well-prepared to take over the 2014 operation. Cadet Wilkins is dynamic enough to develop his replacements in CAP while still taking the time to focus passionately on individuals; several cadets attribute their own retention, progress, and development in the program to his personal encouragement and mentoring.

Outside of CAP, Cadet Wilkins worked hard to achieve an ACT Score in the National top 1% and has received impressive grades in the seven AP college courses he has been involved with while still in high school. Most notably, he was recently honored with a Presidential Scholarship from Montana State University and the Society of American Military Engineers. He is also the Sterling Scholar for Social Sciences at the Utah State level.

Cadet Wilkins attributes these impressive accomplishments to the foundations of leadership that he learned as a cadet in CAP and brings good credit upon himself, Utah Wing, and the Civil Air Patrol. Utah Wing is proud to recognize him as the 2014 Cadet of the Year.

Congratulations again, Luke!

**Maj. Michael Fernandez, Maj. Jason Mettmann, SFO Rachel Niedfeldt
Utah Wing Cadet Programs Team**